

3.1 The National Broadcaster

There are two national government-owned television networks. These are operated by:

- * The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) - The ABC provides a comprehensive publicly funded television service (ie no advertising) to all significant population centres in Australia, similar in many respects to the BBC. In addition, the ABC provides a direct satellite service to remote communities and homesteads using 30W transponders on AUSSAT's current generation satellites. This service is known as HACBSS (Homestead and Community Broadcasting Satellite Service).
- * The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) - SBS provides a multi-cultural television service to the capital cities and major regional centres. A large part of the programming is in foreign languages, sub-titled in English, and is intended to serve the migrant communities of various ethnic origins. This network was originally completely publicly funded. However last year the Government decided that it would be partially funded by advertising.

It should be noted that there are no television receiver licence fees in Australia. Public funding of national broadcasters is entirely from general taxation revenue.

3.2 Commercial Broadcasters

There are currently three commercial television stations in each of the major capitals (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth). Until recently there were another 35 regional stations one for each significant major population centre, including Canberra, Hobart and Darwin. All these stations were originally established as independent operations, with little or no networking.

Each station has a service area defined in terms of particular communities and their populations. Where a single transmitter can not adequately serve the entire area, translators are used to re-broadcast the signal. No company was permitted to have significant ownership of more than two stations.

In addition, there are three remote commercial television services (RCTS) serving areas not previously covered by commercial television. Like HACBSS, these are direct satellite broadcasting services using 30W transponders on